

FIFTEEN MONTHS ROUND ABOUT

MANITOBA

AND

THE NORTH WEST.

A Lecture

BY

J. G. MOORE.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

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On the 13th October, 1881, the Sardinian, a fine steamer of the Allan Line, carried out of the Mersey 600 passengers, many of whom, like myself, were bound for Manitoba. Of our voyage generally I do not intend to say much, except that it was especially rough and disagreeable until we reached the Gulf of St.

ERRATUM

In page 25 the words "I fear I have failed to convey to your minds one-half of the natural beauties of Manitoba" have been accidentally repeated

along the coast of Gaspé land. An arc of light opal green, flecked with streaks of gold, and resting on a base of deep purple, the whole surrounded by crimson fleecy clouds marks the approach of day. On our left, a barren, rocky coast, with tiny white cottages dotted up its mountain slopes. The surface of the ocean scarce stirred by a ripple, all the vast expanse of water acting as a mirror and flashing back the gorgeous beauty of the skies; whilst sweeping over the sea, and now and again laving their snowy breasts in the foam left in the steamer's wake, are scores of sea mews. I remember this morning far better than anything else that met my eyes during our run over the Atlantic. Early the next day we were off Quebec, and the first view of this city is superb. It runs in the shape of an elongated horse-



On the 13th October, 1881, the *Sardinian*, a fine steamer of the Allan Line, carried out of the Mersey 600 passengers, many of whom, like myself, were bound for Manitoba. Of our voyage generally I do not intend to say much, except that it was especially rough and disagreeable until we reached the Gulf of St. Lawrence, when we met with glorious weather. One morning I remember especially. We had sighted a few icebergs, gliding by white and ghost-like. As we passed on towards our destination huge whales and grampus were lazily rolling on the summit of the sea, spouting now and again fountains of water into the air, and thousands of wild fowl were resting on or flitting over the waves. It is sunrise. We are steaming along the coast of Gaspé land. An arc of light opal green, flecked with streaks of gold, and resting on a base of deep purple, the whole surrounded by crimson fleecy clouds marks the approach of day. On our left, a barren, rocky coast, with tiny white cottages dotted up its mountain slopes. The surface of the ocean scarce stirred by a ripple, all the vast expanse of water acting as a mirror and flashing back the gorgeous beauty of the skies; whilst sweeping over the sea, and now and again laving their snowy breasts in the foam left in the steamer's wake, are scores of sea mews. I remember this morning far better than anything else that met my eyes during our run over the Atlantic. Early the next day we were off Quebec, and the first view of this city is superb. It runs in the shape of an elongated horse-

shoe around and fringing the banks of the St. Lawrence river. Rocky heights, frowning batteries, and strong stout walls look down on the water below from the one side, whilst, on the opposite spur, fir-clad hills, with maple dressed in its autumnal tints peeping in here and there, attract the eye from the quaint stone churches, monasteries, and square houses, which, apparently, have been sown broadcast by some unpractised husbandman, for in one place they are grouped thickly together; in another, two or three seem lost in a very network of roads. And now for the Custom House. All who land at Quebec must be prepared for a little inconvenience—perchance the loss of a little temper. The best thing to do is to stand quite still and let other people run and shout. You will get your baggage through the hands of the examiners quicker, for they may have some sympathy with a few quiet individuals, but shouters are a nuisance anywhere, and must be especially so to a busy man who has numbers of them all at it together. Again, there is no reason for hurry; the train for Montreal will not leave until the luggage is all through and on board the train (as they say in Canada). Our experience is singular. Emigrants—male and female, Irish, Swedes, Scotch, and English—the broad dialect of Somerset side by side with the clear enunciation and prolonged o's and a's of Warwickshire; each woman with children, some with babies, all with bundles, asking for their goods, dancing after their boxes, and, when obtained, dragging them here and there, and clamouring in their mixture of tongues for immediate assistance, but in vain. The rule and practice is beautifully simple. From the hold of the ship come up the huge boxes. These are placed on drays, driven by French Canadians, who dash off with their respective loads to a huge shed, turn round the vehicle, shoot out promiscuously on and over each other a medley load of various weight, character, and sizes,

in one small avalanche. Just as you have successfully fought your way to one of your possessions, and having, by the removal of a large bundle (feeling much like a fair division of fire-shovels, feather beds, and gridirons) gained one of your trunks, up comes another wagon, whips round, and shoots another cargo at you, when, to escape being flattened out like a sole, you flee from your position, whilst your all but recovered treasure is buried beneath the penates of some score of emigrants. Patience is the only thing to aid you. You may find it a relief to your feelings, combined with a public exhibition of patriotism, to stand around, and converse loudly on the difference between the treatment of your belongings by polite railway porters in England, and the gross disrespect shown by the French Canadians in Quebec; it may be a good way of relieving your wrath, and will keep you out of the way until the luggage is sorted. But, joking apart, the Canadians and Americans treat all baggage as if it had been made for the express purpose of testing its strength through the aid of huge muscular porters: there is much improvement needed here. A word as to what not to take to Manitoba. Do not take fire-irons, cooking utensils (especially kitcheners of gigantic size). Chairs, tables, revolvers—or buy a gun if you do not possess one—if you have a gun take it; but have with you warm clothes, flannel shirts, underclothing, boots (one pair of which, for men, should come up to the knee, like the field boots used by sportsmen), blankets, pillow-cases, and such like, crockery, spoons, forks, knives, and a good strong butcher's knife (always useful), a tin opener for canned goods you will have to take on the prairies, and the best opener I ever saw cost $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. in Stratford. Women should take warm clothes for winter and print dresses for the summer. Do not carry axes, hammers, &c. These things weigh, and you will buy tools far more suitable to the country at Winnipeg, Brandon, Regina, or any town in the Far West. A gun you will want;

but if you have not one you can buy one on the spot that will meet all your requirements and save the expense of carriage. Remember, 100lb. is all the weight you can take through free, and extra charges are terribly heavy. The poorer class of emigrants should, before starting on the cars, buy some canned meats and biscuits to save the expense of meals by the way. There is always water on the cars, and you can get a cup of hot tea at certain stations on the route. Another thing—mind your luggage is all checked through to Chicago—i.e., you will see a porter carrying a collection of brass numbers on straps. One of these, say No. 10, he will put on one piece of your luggage and give you a brass stamp bearing a corresponding No 10. You will not see the boxes until the train reaches Chicago, when you will again re-check it to Winnipeg. Do this with all your belongings that you do not want daily—such as brush and comb, change of linen, &c., which place in a small handbag, and keep with you. An examination of baggage takes place by the United States Customs officers, either at Point Huron or St. Vincent. Everybody must get out then, and open their boxes and show the contents. Failure in this will cost a great delay, as the baggage will be left on the platform. Now, having given you these few hints, I will resume my journey. A shout of “All aboard for Montreal” starts us from our various occupations, and we are soon ensconced on the long Pullman cars, steaming from Quebec to the Queen City of the Dominion. Our way is through forest and prairie. Now we fly by a log hut, with the surrounding wheat stubble of last harvest being turned again, ready for the crop of next season; over wooden bridges, and across mighty rivers that rush and dance on rocky boulders; by forest trees clad in autumnal tints of every shade, from the Virginian creeper to the bright, golden yellow of the dwarf oak. Anon, we are at the base of mighty hills, girded about with the pine and hemlock, and capped

with the pure, white snow. The clouds are rolling round and round the summit, and the sun shines on them and the mountain tops, and sprinkles the trees with triplets of silver. After mid-day, we reach Richmond, where lunch is provided. Then onward. The scene has changed. We are now running through fields well-cultivated, neat fences, and in each field wells of water for the cattle. Fine shorthorns look lazily up at us as we whiz by, and sheep rush away a space, and turn again to look. But enough of panorama, or I shall scarce reach Manitoba. At 6 p.m. we move slowly through the tubular bridge over the St. Lawrence (which a fellow-passenger informs us is two miles in length), and in a few minutes are in Montreal. This is a charming city, if I could wait to talk about it. Mount Royal, a fine mountain, stands alone like a sentinel on guard at the back, looking down upon the city, whilst the mighty St. Lawrence circles around its opposite boundary, bearing upon its bosom (a common but convenient illustration) huge ships of many nations. But we must onward. From Montreal we go to Toronto, thence to Chicago—a most appropriate dwelling for our Yankee cousins, full of bustle and energy, combined with a fair proportion of dirt. Next day away to St. Paul, by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railway. One more journey, from St. Paul to St. Vincent, then over the Red River, and you are at Emerson, the gateway city of Manitoba. And now, 65 miles more, and you will be landed in Winnipeg, the capital of Manitoba, and the most wonderful city of modern times. But what is the scenery that has met the eye on our voyage (for in many things it resembles a sea voyage more than a journey by land)? It takes us through scenes that no words of mine can do justice to. In some places the forest, thick with many varieties of trees, blended in a mass of autumnal colour, not in shreds, but in one great mass, standing out against the liquid blue sky. Then we glide on to

the prairie. In a short time there is no tree in sight ; nothing for miles and miles but grass, rolling in billows exactly like a heaving sea. Again, we are running alongside a large lake. Miniature waves are seething, and curling, and dashing on shore, whilst thousands of ducks, widgeon, and wild geese whirl and fly up, and settle. It is now nine at night. The conductor comes into the car, "Gentlemen, Winnipeg is in sight." A rush to the windows, we are dashing over the Red River, and, in a semi-circle before us, lies the city. After a drive by the bright moon, we get a bed for the night, and, in the morning, rise to look at Winnipeg, the capital of the Lone Land. Ten years ago, a few log huts encircled Fort Garry, which stood in the midst of a large prairie comparatively unknown to the world. To-day, a city of nearly 30,000 inhabitants, with a world-wide reputation, rears its proud head to the sky, and the value of its buildings for the year 1882 has been assessed at 30,432,000 dollars, or £6,086,400 sterling. This is an increase of 1,000 per cent. during the last three years. With the exception of Chicago, it is doubtful if such an advance can be shown by any other modern city. The Red and Assineboine rivers here form a junction, and make the southern and eastern boundaries of the city. Close to the bridge over the Assineboine is what remains of old Fort Garry, although the outer walls, the bastions, and much of the building have been removed to make room for the widening of Main Street.

We will now take our bearings. Due west lie the Rocky Mountains, to the east is Lake Superior, south we have the United States and Canada, north the prairie extends to Hudson's Bay. Main Street, the principal artery, is from 130 to 135 feet in width, and runs nearly parallel to the Red River. On each side of the street are built, or are in process of erection, elegant and stately buildings, for banks, stores, private

dwelling, and public institutions. The electric light has superseded gas, and illuminates the entire length of the broad avenue—tram-cars pass and re-pass each other in quick succession—telephone communication is the rule, and not the exception, for every office and place of business. Four fine bridges span the two rivers at different points; building goes on with incredible rapidity. Even in my recollection, what has been rolling prairie is now a street with wooden pavement, gravelled roads, and rows of handsome dwelling houses.

The Anglican Church possesses Trinity Church and Christ Church, in addition to the Cathedral, two miles distant, which is situate on the banks of the Red River, near Kildonan, and adjoining the residence of that much-loved prelate, Bishop Machray, the Bishop of Rupert's Land.

The Roman Catholics are exceptionally strong in numbers and in wealth; their charity is great, and, in addition to their cathedral, churches, and schools, they throw open to all in need the hospital at St. Boniface, which is their own institution.

The Presbyterians are an exceedingly powerful body, and besides their places of worship, have erected Manitoba College, where those studying for their ministry receive a superior education, to fit them for the office they have undertaken.

In addition to these, there are many Dissenting bodies, each with their chapels, and all forming themselves into large congregations.

St. John's College, which embraces also St. John's College for Boys and St. John's College Ladies' School, is under the supervision of and governed by a council, under statutes given by the Bishop of Rupert's Land. In addition to these, there are large middle class and other schools, sufficient to educate, and educate well, all the juveniles residing in or near Winnipeg, so that no class is left without the means of obtaining an

almost free and sound education for their little ones.

Having thus briefly touched upon some of the institutions of the city, I will now draw your attention to the way in which emigrants, both male and female, obtain employment here, and the average wages earned by them. First the ladies:—The most independent females I have met with are decidedly what are termed in rural districts in England “washerwomen,” or, in the more refined diction of Manitoba, “laundresses.” When I tell you (as a victim) that their charges lead not into habits of parsimony, or more economical outlay of coin entrusted to you, but rather verge on lavish expenditure upon such ordinary articles of domestic comfort as pocket-handkerchiefs and collars, you will agree with me that this is indeed the “Paradise of the Laundry.” One dollar, or 4s. 2d., per dozen for each article of attire, including the before-mentioned handkerchiefs and collars, must lead the operator from soapsuds and mangle to the more rosy prospect of independence, and, indeed, I know of few better openings for the industrious woman than that of starting an English laundry. With respect to ordinary trades, mechanics, artisans, labourers, &c., I quote from the *Winnipeg Daily Times* of September 28th, 1882:—

Bricklayers	per day	25s 0d
Stonecutters	„	16s 8d to £1 0s 10d
Plasterers	„	16s 8d
Machinists	„	16s 8d
Sawmill men	„	16s 8d
Carpenters	„	15s 0d to 16s 8d
Moulders	„	14s 7d
Painters	„	12s 6d to 14s 8d
Blacksmiths	„	12s 6d
Tailors and Shoemakers	„	10s 5d to 12s 6d
Labourers in the city	„	10s 5d to 11s 6d
Farm labourers, with board per month		£8 6s 8d to £9 6s 8d
Servants, females, with board	„	£3 2s 6d to £5 3s 0d

One thing detracts much from the beauty of Winnipeg. The huge signboards that hang, projecting from the stores to the street, are hideous in the extreme. A

huge lottle, twenty feet in height, perched near the chimneys, and overshadowing them, draws attention to the wine merchant. A large gilt blunderbuss denotes the gunmaker; another calls his shop the Golden Lion Store, and outside is a great wooden pillar, with an impossible animal perched upon the top, heavily gilt, and apparently hungry, from the way he keeps his mouth open. The fishmonger possesses a huge imitation fish, projecting over your head as you pass, and standing at right angles to the building—from its size a shark, from its mild appearance and conformation, a trout. The sooner these horrors are presented as curiosities to a museum the better will be the appearance of Winnipeg.

Now, what are the disadvantages of this country? We must look on both sides of all questions. Let us see how this stands the light of experience. To begin with—the winter is beyond all question most severe, the thermometer on exceptional occasions, and for a short time, touching 33 deg below zero, but, during the few weeks of the present winter I spent in Manitoba, with the exception of a 48 hours' spell of very cold weather, the winter was delightful—a blue sky, a brilliant sun, a dry delicious atmosphere that exhilarates you as you dance more than walk along. All these help to dispel the idea of zeros, and give a feeling of perfect health and enjoyment. So much was this the case, that I more than once felt an almost irresistible inclination to offer a small boy 10 cents to retire into a secluded position and join in a game of leap frog. But you *must* be well clothed. Furs or the warmest of cloth should constitute your outer garments, whilst a fur cap that will pull over your ears is indispensable. All these can be bought in Winnipeg. The winter lasts a little less than five months—then a sudden thaw leads up to wet weather, which renders the roads difficult to traverse. This thaw occurs late in March or early in April, and the spring

that follows is most charming. But I will go on with my list of disagreeables. The heat in summer during the day is intense, but the nights are always cool. The greatest plagues are the mosquitoes, but, fortunately, their career is a brief one of a few weeks' duration, just in the heat of summer. I have had my wrists, neck, and face distorted out of all shape by the swelling that follows the sting of these diminutive but ferocious adversaries. I do not know whether a week's feeding on you induces Mr. Mosquito to select "fresh fields and pastures new," or whether it is that the skin has become so accustomed to the venom of the sting that the swelling is minimised, but it is an undoubted fact that you do not feel anything like the discomfort after a short time has elapsed. When camping on the prairie, a smudge is made to keep off the flies during the night, so that your horses can feed with less discomfort from the attacks of these winged antagonists. A smudge is a fire, started with dry wood, covered up with green sticks and sods, so that smoke is continuously kept up during the dark hours. Another pest is a blizzard. Do you know what a blizzard is? I presume you will guess a bird. Well, it is not. But it is the most dangerous storm to human life that Canada produces. It is caused by the dry particles of snow raised by the wind from the frozen prairie, and dashed in circles hither and thither with great rapidity. The light of the sun is soon darkened by the uplifted snow-cloud, and the effect of these atoms striking the face is like to being charged with needle points. Horses run round in circles and will not face it, and the only hope of the traveller is to get into timber, if adjacent, or failing this, to get into the nearest ravine or coulee, bank up snow to create warmth, roll up in your buffalo robes, and wait until the storm is past. Travellers new to this Arctic tempest fight on towards their goal, buffeting away their strength in puny efforts against the mighty wind, until, at length, thoroughly exhausted,

they fall, and, if they slumber, die. But this is an exceptional storm—of no moment in the towns, only dangerous when encountered on the prairie; easily overcome with care, or in the company of old settlers. Another drawback is the high rent charged in Winnipeg. A small house for an artisan costs from £3 to £4 per month, but you must place on the other side the high wages obtained. Provisions are much dearer than in Southern Canada at present, but the vast herds of cattle now grazing on the prairie and the increased facility of transport will soon relieve the pressure in this respect. Indeed, beef is as cheap in Winnipeg to-day as it is in Stratford-upon-Avon.

For amusement, there is cricket and lawn tennis in summer; in winter, skating, curling, snow-shoeing, and shooting, in season. Talking of cricket, reminds me of an anecdote in which one of our friends over the border acted as umpire, which I will briefly give you. A match was being played at Toronto some years back, but, through some mishap, the umpire did not appear in time to begin his duties. Whilst debating the choice of another to fill the place, they were addressed by a gaunt Yankee who was standing near nursing a large sun umbrella, "What is your difficulty?" "We have no umpire." "I'll empire for you," quoth the long one. "Do you know cricket?" "I'd blush to murmur." So, accordingly, he was cordially thanked and taken to the wicket. A clergyman, a Mr. Phillips, did battle for Toronto, and took the first over. The American umpire was placidly smoking a cigarette, apparently enjoying the view of the adjoining country, when a sharp "How's that?" an appeal as to a catch at the wicket, aroused him. "How's what?" retorted umpire. "That catch," replied wicket-keeper. "Was there a catch?" "Yes." "This must be a subject of investigation," and, slowly proceeding to the other wicket, he opened his umbrella, and thus cross-examined the astonished

batsman. "Did you hit that ball with your club?" "Well, I don't know that I am bound to answer, but I think I did." To wicket keeper, "Did you ketch that ball, short stop?" "Yes." To batsman, "Your club hit that ball you say." "Yes." Decision, "Then, by Mesopotamia, you're out."

I am reminded that the expense of passage and land travelling to Winnipeg has not yet been touched upon. The reason is this, that in the books published by the Government all such particulars are duly set forth, but I may briefly say this:—Go by the Allan line of steamers from Liverpool to Quebec. It is the most comfortable and cheap travelling. Their assisted rates are as follows:—"Agricultural labourers, £3 to Quebec; artisans and mechanics, £4; children between 1 and 12 years, £2; infants, 10s; all rail route to Winnipeg, £4 8s 11d." I cannot advise the Lake route at present, although it is cheaper. The arrangements are not so complete as to make it advisable to put them to the test. Go in the months of April, May, or June. The winter will be over, the ground ready for seed; work everywhere will be flourishing and abundant, but you may find travelling over the prairie wet. A word as to savings. One proof as to the prosperity of a country is to be found in the savings of the working classes, and in this respect you will find Winnipeg to be in a most flourishing state. From Mr. Drummond's returns, the Receiver-General of the City, I take these extracts:—Up to October, 1882, the deposits in the Post-office Savings' Bank in Winnipeg reached the total of £122,106 whilst the amount deposited from the 1st to the 8th of July in that year reached a no less sum than £48,352. This money is almost exclusively the savings of the working classes, and when we reflect that a proportion of the earnings had been expended in the purchase of land in the outskirts of the city for the purpose of erecting dwellings for occupation, and that all the principal commercial banks have a separate branch for savings,

besides the amounts sent by P.O.O. to the wives and families at home, I think you will agree with me that the labouring classes must be doing well.

As a further proof of their progress, I will read you an extract from a letter dated December 11th, 1882, written by a Mr. John Hale, a lather, of 16, Stoke Newington-road, London, published in the London papers. He says—"I worked on several jobs where bricklayers and plasterers had to do their own labouring, because they could not get labourers. No man thinks of doing anything for less than 8s. 4d. per day. Good boys can get as much as 6s. 1d. per day. I knew women that were making their £4 3s. 4d. per week at laundry work. I should add that working men and their families must expect a little rough life for a few months, until they get properly settled down." And he adds:—"My advice to anyone who thinks of going to America at all is to go to Manitoba, as anyone willing to work can get it there, and make money. But I would not advise anyone to go there who drinks. All drinks there cost 10 cents each, except milk, which can be bought for 5d. per quart. A man who drinks heavily is worse off there than here." A word as to our imports and customs duties paid. Eight months' trade with England and the United States up to September 1st shows:—In 1882 5,230,378 dols., against 1,820,941 dols. in 1881, showing an increase of 3,419,437 dols., or about £683,887. But whilst trade with the States and England has increased, it is absolutely nothing to be compared with that done with Lower Canada. For the fiscal year ending June, 1882, this amounted to 10,575,770 dols., or about £2,115,154. Now, as to employment for boys. Perhaps some of the most industrious of our inhabitants in the cities are the newspaper lads. Very different are they from the ragged urchins who follow a similar profession in our great centres. These small vendors of news are all well clad, cleanly in appearance, and courteous in manner.

It is one of the sights of the capital to see these little busybodies in the winter, trotting about in their fur caps and warm coats, offering their papers for sale. They make it pay well, too. I have it on the authority of one of the editors of a daily paper that most of these little ones earn not less than 3s. 6d. to 5s. per day.

And now for agriculture. The land on each side of the railway for a distance of 24 miles in breadth is termed the railway belt, and as far as the Canadian and Pacific Railway line has been run west of Winnipeg (about 500 miles), it is divided into townships. Each township contains 36 square miles, and is divided into 36 separate square miles, which are termed sections, and each section is divided into four equal portions of 160 acres each. The 36 sections are numbered consecutively from 1 to 36. The even numbered ones belong to the Government for the purpose of homesteads and pre-emptions for settlers, with the exception of two which belong to the Hudson Bay Company, and can be purchased at prices varying from 25s to 35s per acre, without any settlement duties whatever. The odd numbered ones are owned by the Central Pacific Railway, except Nos. 11 and 29, which are reserved for the purposes of education, and are sold by public auction, and the proceeds applied solely for the support of education. Any vacant quarter section of 160 acres can be selected and entered upon by the emigrant on payment of 50s, and a further condition of a residence of six months in each year on the land for a term of three years, the building of a house, and the cropping of fifteen acres of land.

At the expiration of that period he then has the right to purchase the adjoining 160 acres at the sum of 8s 4d to 10s 6d per acre, and this is termed his pre-emption, nominated and chosen by him at the time of his entry. From the Central Pacific Railway the land can be bought at 10s 6d per acre, payable, if wished, in six annual payments, with interest at six per cent. per

annum, upon certain conditions of breaking and cropping. A rebate of one half of the purchase money is returned to the farmer upon all the land placed under crop in the course of the five years. It is only right to warn intending settlers that there is very little land remaining for settlement within the railway belt near to the large cities, or adjoining a railway station. If the emigrant who is wishing to farm be not possessed of capital sufficient to buy land, my advice to him would be to get just as far west as he is compelled to go to obtain good land in the railway belt, and, having secured his property by entry at the nearest land-office, to then obtain work at a farm in the locality for the summer, where he will earn from £6 to £7 per month and his board. With this money he will be able to hire a team and plough and break part of his land ready for the next year's cropping. But to those who possess some capital I would say, buy an improved farm and, if possible, near to a growing city. You will obtain these, with a log-house, stables, granary, wells sunk, part fenced, and, most important of all, a number of acres ploughed, ready to be cropped, for from three to four pounds per acre, and the first season's crop will, over and above the expenses, pretty nearly pay for your land. The first twelve months is the hard time for a settler on virgin soil. He has his land to break, hardly any crop to look forward to, hay to gather and cut, house and buildings to erect, whereas, if the ploughing be ready to hand, house and buildings up, and a golden harvest the first year, he is on his way to independence at a small outlay. My reason for saying hardly any crop to look forward to is this. It is true, that he can plant potatoes on the broken prairie soil, and he can obtain a light crop of oats; but all the spare time he can give should be devoted to breaking, so that the hot summer sun and the prairie wind will rot the grass and make it ready for back ploughing in the autumn. This, after a

winter on it, comes out a fine tilth in the spring of the following year, and ready for crop. Prior to the purchase of any land or even going to view it for the purpose of settlement, go to the nearest Dominion land office, and ask to see the surveyor's report upon this particular section. You will be met with all kindness, and information most fully given to you there. Of course, bad land, medium land, and good land, heavy clay, deep black loam, sandy loam, and worthless sand hills, are all to be found there, but the good far exceeds the bad. A guide to all land is the classification made by the surveyors by their division of the soil into classes 1, 2, 3, 4, &c., according to quality, which classification will be shown to anyone in the land office. One word as to the pamphlets circulated by some of the railway companies of the United States. Do not trust them. One contained the following paragraph :—"The climate of Manitoba consists of seven months of Arctic winter and five months of cold weather." This has called forth a righteously indignant denial from Archbishop Tache, who says, in a letter bearing date 25th October, 1882 :—"For my part, after 37 years of experience, I find the climate more pleasant in Manitoba than in any other country I have seen." And, generally, a severe contradiction is given to the whole of these false statements. The Americans have a lot of poor land for sale, and they are apt to puff up their own goods by depreciating those of their neighbours.

A great bugbear to many is the Indian, and this fear has not been diminished by the railway and newspaper reports of the United States. Amongst my introductions in Winnipeg must be ranked very high an interview with a lady known as the Queen of the Swampis. This monarch is neither youthful nor beautiful, but her regal attire is beyond dispute unique. Her Majesty was robed in an old scarlet officer's coat of ancient cut, given to her, I understand, from the

Government stores, upon the breast of which were suspended many silver medals of the dimensions of an ordinary tea-cup. Her head-dress was composed of some material like very ancient and ill-used tapestry, whilst, above her mocassins, were tucked up the extremities of what Mrs. Grundy terms unmentionables, or the tailor trousers. As far as I could glean from a disjointed and brief conversation with this Swampiean beauty, she was possessed with an irresistible craving to gaze upon the lineaments of our most gracious Majesty as engraved by the authorities of the Mint upon 25 or 50 cent. pieces, which coinage, when exhibited by the possessor, were promptly pouched by the lady. To those desiring an interview there is no difficulty either to see or speak to her. On a subsequent occasion Madame was going in for æstheticism. During her promenade of Main Street she passed a well-known music store, owned by one of the favourite "boys" of the city, who called in the Queen and presented her with a large red and black Japanese umbrella, and a huge paper sunflower for a fan. To see the old lady in her regimentals, with the umbrella open and the flower held like a dagger in the other hand, passing through the staring crowd with the placid look of stolid satisfaction on her dusky face, would have exhilarated Oscar Wilde and charmed his followers. Naught impresses an Indian like finery. An old parish beadle or a town crier in the uniform of our forefathers would strike more awe into his or her bosom than a view of the Governor-General attended by the magnates of the Dominion. The North American Indian of Canada is a well-contented, peaceable individual, well treated by the Government, safe from intrusion upon his own territorial reserves, in receipt of treaty money yearly, presented with oxen, ploughs, harrows, and seed for his land, with the vast prairies, forests, and rivers free to him to hunt and to trap, and, above all, living under an

administration of justice which gives him an equality with, and protects his rights as much, as those of his white neighbour. There is but little fear, either in the present or the future, of any outbreak on his part. The worst characteristic of the Indian is his inattention to the lavatory. Washing is not amongst his virtues, and Dickens's "unsorped of Ipswich" might be coadjutors of the Cree, the Blackfeet, the Sioux, the Bloods, and the Swampis. But as it is well to adduce testimony upon this point, I will read to you the opinion of Max Adeler, an American writer.

"Now some think that the red man displays a want of good taste in declining to bathe himself; but I don't. What is dirt? It is simply—matter;—the same kind of matter that exists everywhere. The earth is made of dirt; the things we eat are dirt, and they grow in the dirt; and when we die and are buried we return again to the dirt from which we were made. Science says that all dirt is clean. The savage Indian knows this; his original mind grasps this idea; he has his eagle eye on science, and he has no soap. Dirt is *warm*. A layer one-sixteenth of an inch *thick* on a man is said by Professor Huxley to be as comfortable as a fifty-dollar suit of clothes. Why, then, should the child of the forest undress himself once a week by scraping this off, and expose himself to the rude blasts of winter? He has too much sense. His head is too level to let him take a square wash more than once in every twenty years, and even then he don't rub hard.

Now, many ignorant people consider scalping inhuman. I don't. I look upon it as one of the most beneficent processes ever introduced for the amelioration of the sufferings of the race. What is hair? It is an excrescence. If it grows, it costs a man a great deal of money and trouble to keep it cut. If it falls out, the man becomes bald and the flies bother him. What does the Indian do in this emergency. With characteristic sagacity he lifts out the whole scalp and ends the annoyance and expense. And then look at the saving from other sources. Professor Huxley estimates that 2,000 pounds of the food that a man eats in a year go to nourish his hair. Remove that hair and you save that much food. If I had my way I would have every baby scalped when it is vaccinated, as a measure of political economy."

In the North-west men are made temperate by Act of Parliament. It is a very grave offence, and punishable with a heavy fine, to introduce or carry with you any stimulant whatever. This also applies to the principal

portion of Manitoba, the exception being in the cities where municipal government has been established, and drunkenness can be dealt with by the arm of the civil law. The reason of this law being so rigorously enforced is to prevent any fire-water finding its way to the Indian, for if he imbibes the fiery spirit, it seems to change him into a veritable fiend. Medicinal permits are granted to travellers solely by the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, or of the North-west territories.

I will give you an experience of a drive across the prairie undertaken in the spring of last year, which will show you a few of the difficulties to be met with. Six of us in party, we started by train from Winnipeg to Grand Valley, which is on the opposite bank of the Assiniboine to Brandon, about 133 miles west of our starting point. We reached here about five p.m., and calmly awaited our two wagons and teams which had to cross the ferry. We did wait—until six the next morning, for the owner of the ferry declined conveying the horses over until that time. In vain were all our powers of persuasion tried, dollar notes were smiled at, invective was useless, so we awaited his good pleasure. A little before seven we were able to load up, and started for Rapid City. Our way lies over an undulating country, fairly settled with farmers. We cross extemporised bridges laid over the mud in the coulees, dash through a small creek or two: ducks and teal by hundreds swim in the little lakes, now on the right hand and now on the left, plovers—pretty little fellows with long golden legs and speckled jackets—prairie grouse, wood partridge, falcons, and bitterns, with many gorgeous-plumed visitors to these regions, cross our path again and again. In about three hours we reach Rapid City. Do not picture to yourself a second Winnipeg. Rapid City, although a flourishing town, would be termed here a village. The town stands on the banks of the little Saskatchewan river, and, as it is growing fast,

the inhabitants think it only wants the railway to bloom forth into a Chicago. Here we waited, took out the horses, rested them, baited them (not forgetting ourselves), then on towards the three forks. To reach this point we had to cross several mud holes, some covered with sheets of water, others apparently dry, but with a thin coating of treacherous mud. In one of the former we were firmly fixed. In vain the driver shouted his most persuasive shout to encourage the horses. They pulled until exhausted, and then lay down. Out jumped the Jehu, up to his waist in water and liquid mud, unfastened the traces, took the horses out, and led them ashore, and the whole company had to plunge in, put their shoulders to the wheels, and at length out rolled wagon No. 1; but in the meantime wagon No. 2 had charged the mud, and likewise was stuck fast, so we had the delight of repeating the performance with as much celerity and despatch as we could muster. The greater portion of the land from Rapid City to the Three Forks is good, although some alkali exists. This is easily recognisable, as the deposits of alkali lie white and glistening on the surface of the soil, and should always be avoided as land unfit to settle on. About 4 p.m. we reached the Three Forks, which is a solitary house standing on the prairie, from which point three trails strike out in various directions. Up to this time we had made about fifty miles. Another rest of two hours. Then we resume our journey. The scene improves. Bluffs of timber crown the little eminences, large lakes flash in the setting sun, myriads of gulls float in the air around us. These birds are quite safe from the farmers, perfectly harmless to the crops, for they will not touch grain, yet they devour the grasshopper and all insects injurious to the growth of the plant, so it is not to be wondered at that the gull should be regarded as a friend to be encouraged. About six we pass a beautiful lake called Salt Lake from its briny water. On the far side of this lake,

from the trail we are taking, stands a long granite cliff, about two or three miles in length. Green moss is trailing down its perpendicular sides until it reaches the tiny waves of the lake, whilst the summit, flat as a billiard table, is one white carpet of strawberries in bloom. On the surface of the lake, which is quivering and dancing in the fading light, rest or roam, according to their desire, thousands of waterfowl—coot, loon, teal, wild duck, and diver. This is a sweet spot, but succeeding scenes, other lakes, rolling prairie, sparkling creeks, quickly follow as we drive onward. It was ten at night when our horses plunged into the shallows of Shoal Lake—clear, pellucid water, rolling up to a beach of tiny stones. Here we find a log hut, where we rest for five hours, and then our party and wagon start on for Birtle, our destination. The other team is too much played out to proceed for some hours, so we lead the van. The half moon has just risen, and gives some light as we move onward. Frogs in full song fill the air with their strange chorus. Night or mosquito hawks shriek as they dash and circle after their prey. Save this, the night is still. Deceived by the moonlight, we lose our track, and are buried up to the axles in an alkaline mud pit. This is a more serious stoppage. Horses have to be taken out, all portmanteaus, food, and rugs have to be taken to the bank, the seats to be unscrewed and removed, and then, for more than an hour, we try, and try in vain to move the vehicle. As a last resort we procure stakes of wood, and whilst three lift at the wheels, the others place first one piece and then another under the rim, and so inch by inch, first at one wheel then at the other, groping in the mud one minute, shoulders to the wheel another, and lifting another, we gradually but slowly extricate our wagon. With seats screwed on again, all re-loaded, we proceed. Soon daylight is approaching. One minute the moon shines triumphant in the heaven, the next she seems but a piece of pale blue paper with all her glory gone,

for the sun has risen with a bound, and throws a warm crimson glow over prairie and lake, and imparts a sense of warmth and companionship to us. We are nearing Birtle. This is Surrey surely—hill and dale, woods and river, farm-houses peeping out from their resting places, wheat and oats growing luxuriously. But my companion is sleeping. I hold him on to his perch, and then find myself violently bowing and nodding, and he is holding me on. A cry from the driver, "Birtle." We rub our eyes, and gaze about as if such a thing as sleep were unknown in our experience. Picture to yourselves a Malvern doubled, hills on each side. In the valley, a sweet little river dancing round and over rocks, and twisting here and there until it is lost to sight in the green foliage on either side. The hills broken into gullies, whose sides are wooded tier upon tier to the sky line. Over the Bird Tail Creek or river a wooden bridge, and a small village, with its church and school, its stores and houses. This will give you some sort of an idea of my first bird's eye view of Birtle. Time will not allow me to continue the record of our trip to Fort Ellice the following day; but I will call your attention to the fact that we reached Birtle, ninety-four miles from Grand Valley, at five in the morning, and without unduly distressing our horses. The neighbourhood of Birtle is exceedingly fertile and well farmed; there is quite a large agricultural community there, and most of them English. I was told that at the last ball given in the winter there were more than seventy ladies present, so you see it cannot be uncivilised. We had to drive ninety-four miles; now Elk Head, a station on the Central Pacific Railway, is only eighteen miles distant, and the Portage and Westbourne railway are pushing forward their line, which will be close to Birtle.

I fear I have failed to convey to your minds one half of the natural beauties of Manitoba. First I must give precedence to the Aurora Borealis. This is a

common but nevertheless ever changing scene of beauty. Sometimes the whole world seems ablaze with its light. Let me try and sketch to you such a scene. A half circle, occupying one-fourth of the visible heavens, apparently made of white luminous lace, fringed with pinnacles, each space tipped with a quivering pink edging, whilst overhanging all is a second arc of the bluish green peculiar to the Polar Region—the whole is in rapid movement. One minute the bow rises majestically, and expands only to sink gracefully down the next. Again it rises higher and higher. Now the upper shafts of opal contract and touch the lower bow. Picture thousands of white peaks, tipped with exquisite colour, all with the same slow grace saluting each other. Right overhead, away from the arc, is a canopy of shifting light and colour, trembling and full of stars. Words are inadequate to paint such loveliness. I fear I have failed to convey to your minds one half of the natural beauties of Manitoba. The prairie clad in exquisite flowers, varying from the lavender crocus of spring to the tiger lily, the blush red rose, the purple and white prairie clover, the silver willow, the wild pea blossom, the *tiny cactus, with its pink star rising in the centre, the pretty primula, a rich, red, velvety flower with an orange cross, whose name I know not—all these and many more, waving and nodding to the breeze and intermixed with the feather grass, the Seneca, the reed, and the crested sedge, only partially concealing in some parts, in others failing to hide the red burnished glow of acre after acre of strawberries, whose life blood we press out with our wheels as we drive onward. Again, the plum, most delicious of all wild fruit, the grape, the cherry, the raspberry, black and red, the black gooseberry, high and low bush cranberry, blue bear and buffalo berry, and the hazel nut—these, with myriads of mushrooms in spring and fall constitute

our wild fruit, and add to the beauty of this great lone land. To the sportsman there is a paradise. In the big game we have the moose, the waphiti or big elk, the jumping deer, buffalo, musk ox, mountain sheep, and goat, the grizzly bear, the black and the cinnamon, lynx, the grey wood wolf, and the small prairie wolf, the wolverine, hare, and other smaller animals. In winged game we have wild swans, geese, grouse, spruce partridge, sage cock, sandhill crane (the best game bird I have yet eaten), five kinds of plover (all good on toast), snipe, twenty-two species of duck, and, in all, "Macoun" gives forty kinds of game birds in this province. No license is required. You are not warned off any shooting ground. A few miles from the cities you can find big and feathered game, and kill it in season. The grizzly bear is only found near the Rockies, but the black and cinnamon are common, the former being comparatively quiet, and the latter seldom interferes with the traveller unless he commences hostilities. Game you can shoot in any quantity in season, and the product of the hunt helps to save the butcher's bill, besides giving grand sport. It is seldom that one hears a goose story. I will tell you a wild goose tale, as I heard it. An officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, Mr. Prudem, now living but a few miles from Winnipeg, was on the look-out to shoot wild geese as the flocks were passing south from their unknown breeding grounds. He had his chance, fired, and dropped a bird; she turned out to be only wounded, so her captor treated her with care and nursed her. In a few weeks Mrs. Goose was able to waddle around and take observation. So tame did she become that every Sunday, when her owner went to church, the bird attended him to the door, partly running and partly flying. But, spring had come, and with its genial warmth brought the flocks of wild fowl flying north to their nesting places, and one morning the goose lifted herself up on her wings, and joined a passing band of

her kind. The for some time owner had forgotten his patient by the autumn, and already flocks of geese had passed South again, fleeing from the Arctic cold, when one day watching from his door he saw a bird drop from her score of mates, and circling round, alight almost at his feet, run up to him with outstretched neck, many gooseian songs of joy, much shaking and chattering of wings. Again did the bird go to church, and stopped in her old resting place for the winter. Spring saw her join once more a passing crowd of geese. Autumn beheld her return, but not alone. Madame had brought with her a young goose, who was introduced with much fuss and ceremony to her master, but the juvenile did not take to the new life, and in a few hours flew away to join in the Southern flight. The old bird took to its winter habits, and after passing her time as in preceding years, once more in springtime opened wide her pinions and fled away with a migratory band. She never returned. This anecdote can be fully authenticated.

Query.—Have birds memories?

Time has not allowed me to speak of the new discoveries. I will briefly say that four gold mining companies are steadily at work on Lake of the Woods, 135 miles east of Winnipeg, and the assays of the quartz are rich in the extreme, richer, in fact, than any existing mine. Coal is found, and now being worked on the Souris and Saskatchewan rivers, whilst hematite iron ore, yielding 75 per cent. of pure iron, lies on the shore of Lake Winnipeg. This is additional proof, if needed, of the future greatness of this country. It is no part of my duty here to-night to endeavour to catch emigrants. I simply give you my own views, and what has struck me in the fifteen months I have spent in this part of the Dominion of her Majesty. But if any wish to join and aid in the future of Manitoba, there is a hearty welcome to all who possess but one quality, and that

is industry. The loafer is not required. Brains or hands, or both, must be used, and then no man or woman in the possession of youth and strength need fear the result. Some hard experience may come to the new settler, but that will be tempered to you by the unfailing kindness of our Canadian brethren. In truth, their hospitality is without bound. Poverty you need not fear. During the time I have spent there I have not yet been accosted by a beggar, and mendicancy is unknown. Strange as it may seem, incredible as it appears, that benighted land possesses not a workhouse, and no collector of poor's rates knocks at a single door. Wide open are spread the arms of invitation to all workers. Thousands upon thousands more can join in the wealth nature has so lavishly bestowed. If times are hard with you here, there is well-paid labour for every busy hand and working brain. Above your heads still will float the Union Jack of England, in your walks abroad, in your very labour, in your daily life, the same old language will meet your ear. English hands will grasp yours, and English hearts be more ready there, perhaps, than here to show their sympathy in your disappointment.

Permit me, in conclusion, to quote to you an extract from Lord Dufferin's speech when Governor-General in 1877:—

“In a word, apart, secluded from all extraneous influences, nestling at the feet of her majestic mother, Canada dreams her dream, and forebodes her destiny—a dream of ever broadening harvests, multiplying towns and villages, and expanding pastures; of page after page of history added as her contribution to the annals of the Mother Country, and to the glories of the British race; of a perpetuation for all time upon this continent of that temperate and well-balanced system of government which combines in one mighty whole, as the eternal possession of all Englishmen, the brilliant history and the traditions of the past, with the freest and most untrammelled liberty of action in the future.”

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

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